

FORMAL CORRECTION OF TWO SPECIFIC EPITHETS IN THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FLORA

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ABSTRACT

Two specific epithets for southern California taxa, *Aster.greatai* S.B. Parish and *Salvia greatai* T.S. Brandegee, are formally corrected to proper Latin form in accordance with recommendations of the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*, 1988. The corrected spellings are *Aster greatae* Parish and *Salvia greatae* Brandegee.

KEY WORDS: *Aster*, *Salvia*, Asteraceae, Lamiaceae, nomenclature, southern California

In 1902, Samuel B. Parish named a newly discovered *Aster* species in honor of Mr. Louis A. Greata, a resident of San Francisco and an avid amateur plant collector. In so doing, Parish published the species with the epithet *Greatai*, apparently latinizing Greata's name implicitly to "Greataus" and consequently forming the genitive case, or possessive form, as "Greatai." Parish may have made this difficult construction under the false impression that a name or substantive terminating in *-a* in Latin or latinized form was exclusively of feminine gender; consequently, he chose the inopportune *-i* ending to express masculine genitive form. However, the Latin nouns of the first declension which end in *-a* in the nominative singular, while most often understood as being of the feminine gender, are not exclusively so. Examples in Latin include *poeta*, *poetae* (masculine - a poet, or "maker") and *agricola*, *agricolae* (masculine - a farmer, or "one who tills"). The genitive form of the name Greata, therefore, already being of proper Latin form as a first declension noun, is correctly constructed as *Greatae*.

William Stearn (1991) cites numerous analogous examples of this construction from European botanical literature; among them *Colchicum bivonae* Gussone, commemorating Antonino Bivona-Bernardi (1774-1837); *Doronicum*

columnae Tenore, for Fabio Colonna [Fabius Columna] (c. 1567-1650); and *Cirsium lacaitae* Petrak, honoring Charles Carmichael Lacaita (1853-1933). He goes on to state that "more than a hundred specific names with the epithet *balansae* commemorate the French botanical explorer Benedict Balansa (1825-1891) as a result of his extensive collecting. . . , thus Samuel Parish would undoubtedly have used the epithet *greatae* had he been better acquainted with European botanical literature and with botanical Latin."

A formal correction of the erroneously constructed and anomalous epithet, *greatai*, is hereby made in accordance with Article 73.10 and Recommendation 73C.1 of the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* (ICBN) adopted by the Fourteenth International Botanical Congress at Berlin, July-August 1987.

Aster greatae S.B. Parish, *nomen corrigendum*. Corrected from: *Aster Greatai* S.B. Parish, Bull. S. California Acad. 1:15, fig. 2. 1902. Type collection: L.A. *Greata s.n.*, Sept 1900. "Canyons of the San Gabriel Mts., near Pasadena."

Four years after Parish named his *Aster* in Louis Greata's honor, Townshend S. Brandege named a newly discovered *Salvia* species in Greata's honor. Perhaps following the orthographic precedent established by Parish with his *Aster* taxon, Brandege applied the epithet "*Greatai*" to this new *Salvia*.

Again, for the reasons already discussed above, this incorrectly constructed epithet is hereby corrected in accordance with the ICBN.

Salvia greatae T.S. Brandege, *nomen corrigendum*. Corrected from: *Salvia Greatai* T.S. Brandege, Zoe 5:229. 1906. Type collection: H.M. Hall & L.A. *Greata 5848*. "Cañon Springs wash, about four miles northeast of Dos Palmas, Riverside County, California."

FURTHER DISCUSSION

Both of the taxa dealt with here are relatively narrow endemics in southern California. *Aster greatae* ("Greata's Aster") is apparently limited to Los Angeles County, where it occurs in a few southerly canyons of the San Gabriel Mountains, as well as in the adjacent Verdugo Hills (a.k.a. "Verdugo Mountains"). It is currently on the California Native Plant Society's (CNPS's) List 4 (Plants of limited distribution - A watch list). *Salvia greatae* ("Orocopia Sage") is known from a limited area to the northeast of the Salton Sea in Riverside and Imperial counties. There is also an unconfirmed and debatable report from San Bernardino County. This species is currently on the CNPS's List 1B (Plants rare, threatened or endangered in California and elsewhere).

In the intervening years since these taxa were first published, the unusual orthography has caused a degree of confusion for members of the botanical community in southern California. A few workers, being aware of the orthographic problem, have used the correct Latin spellings in their works: e.g., *Aster Greatae* (Abrams 1904; Munz 1935) or *A. greatae* (Abrams 1917), and *Salvia Greatae* (Jaeger 1941; Munz 1935; Munz & Keck 1959) or *S. greatae* (Jepson 1943). Other workers, however, have chosen to retain the orthography as originally published: e.g., *A. Greatai* (Davidson & Moxley 1923; Munz & Keck 1959) or *A. greatai* (Abrams & Ferris 1960; Jepson 1923-25; Munz 1974; Smith & Berg 1988) and *S. greatai* (Abrams 1951; Jepson 1923-25; Munz 1974; Smith & Berg 1988). It is also apparent here that some authors have been inconsistent in their usage, favoring one name over another in subsequent publications.

The fact that these epithets have appeared in print under both spellings has only served to compound the nomenclatural confusion. There are also several floristic and botanical projects currently underway in California that will cite these species once again. A floristic treatment for Los Angeles County (the author, RSA), a floristic treatment for Riverside County (Steve Boyd, RSA), The Jepson Manual project related to the California flora (Dieter Wilken, Project Manager, JEPS), and the Fifth Edition of the California Native Plant Society's Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California (CNPS, at Sacramento) may benefit from clarification of these taxon names.

In order to avoid continued confusion, and insofar as the specific epithets, as originally published, are contrary to the requirements of the ICBN, it is recommended that the corrected orthography formally presented herein be adopted henceforth.

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